



**Testimony Advocating Residential Fire Sprinklers**  
**Testimony in Support of Residential Sprinkler Provisions for One and Two**  
**Family Dwellings in Connecticut (HB 6378) - AN ACT REQUIRING AN**  
**AUTOMATIC FIRE EXTINGUISHING SYSTEM IN ALL ONE AND**  
**TWO-FAMILY HOMES.**

**Submitted to the Committee on Public Safety and Security on March 3, 2011**

There was a house fire, a single family dwelling. The emergency call came in to the fire department that children were trapped. A 7 year old was sleeping in his bedroom.

Firefighters arrived with the Rescue Squad very quickly, they would be the team to search the house, they got there first, apparatus with hose line had yet to arrive. The boy was found, brought out to the paramedics and taken to the hospital where he was later pronounced dead.

A Firefighter went back into the house and continued to search and fight fire. Looking for other children (the mother had tried to rescue them but was badly burned; she sustained 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> degree burns of both arms and had to escape the house). A firefighter became trapped in the family room, where the fire started from an improperly disposed cigarette. There was a flashover. The firefighter died alone in that basement where the temperatures reached over 1100 degrees and was hot enough to melt his face mask.

I know when my kids were teenagers they would sleep through anything. The elderly and children can and do sleep through smoke alarms.

I ask you "Why not Fire Sprinklers?" If they can save one life, one child, one firefighter, the technology is there, USE it! Would you not want this much safety for your 7 year old, 16 year old or parents?

Firefighters in your community give their time and most times it is their free time (most of the firefighters in this country are volunteers). Sometimes staffing the fire stations is an issue in these tough economic times which can add precious seconds to response time. We should give them all the protection to prevent their deaths or serious injuries.

The firefighter who died that night was my son. Fire sprinklers could have saved his life and the life of a small boy he so desperately tried to rescue.



America's 1<sup>st</sup> Responders (your 1<sup>st</sup> link in an emergency) Deserve to be Protected, too!

My friend through the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, whose husband was a Volunteer Fire Chief, had 3 boys, their house caught on fire. He leads his wife and two of the boys to safety. The middle boy sleeps through the smoke alarm. They were found just inside a window. Sprinklers could have given him those extra few minutes they needed before the fire department even arrives.

A firefighter in Virginia (which could be any state in this country, including yours) died in a new home built with a lighter weight construction. A home sprinkler system would have saved his life. Firefighters must have that extra time to do a safe and thorough search for victims. That young firefighter also died alone. You can listen to the audio tapes and hear his pleas for help as he loses his battle with the fire.

Your businesses and places of public meetings are generally all safer, thank goodness, because they have fire sprinklers. Imagine, your work place is safer than where your children sleep.

Some who are associated with Builders Associations will say that "Sprinklers are a luxury and not a necessity". I would like them to say that to the many families who have lost or had someone severely injured in a fire.

**You have the Power to Save Lives.** Can you say no? I cannot believe you would. Your family or friends could be the ones who need that sprinkler.

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation leads a national initiative to reduce the number of firefighter fatalities and injuries. The 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives promote firefighter safety including fire prevention and advocacy for Residential Fire Sprinklers.

Thank you, sincerely, for your consideration of this most passionate issue.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine A. Hedrick".

Catherine A. Hedrick  
NFFF, Survivor Parent